

Prior to 1923 chiefs of department in Saugus were elected by members of the three hose companies located in town. A single permanent Chief of the entire department began in 1923 with the appointment of Chief Mellen R Joy.

In the modern era there have been eight permanent Chiefs of the Saugus Fire Department and one acting chief.

- 1.Chief Mellen Joy * 1923-1936
- 2.Chief William Salsman 1936-1942
- 3.Chief George Drew 1942-1956
- 4.Chief Joesph Maguire 1952-1963
- 5.Acting Chief Albert F. Jervis 1963-1964
- 6.Chief Thomas Nolan 1964-1981
- 7.Acting Chief Walter Waldrip 1981-1983
- 8.Chief George W Parrott III 1983-1991
- 9.Acting Chief Walter Waldrip 1991-1992
- 10.Chief Walter Newbury 1992-2004
- 11.Acting Chief James L Blanchard 2004-2005
- 12.Chief James L Blanchard 2005-2012
- 13.Chief Donald McQuaid 2012-2015

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Chief Mellen R Joy was killed in the line of duty in an explosion and fire on the exact spot of the current day public safety building. Chief Joy had been a Captain on the Boston Fire Department and left that position to become the chief of the Saugus fire Department, Two other firefighters were critically burned but recovered from their injuries.

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Saugus has a civil service chief appointed by virtue of a written exam and and interview process. Captain Walter Waldrip who was the acting chief on two occasions choose not to take the chief of department examination